And i knew you'd come back to me

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And i knew you'd come back to me

by Flightless_Bird

Summary

""I'd thought we'd be on first-name basis by now."

"What, is that proper etiquette after you try to kill someone?" Will scoffed. Dying evidently made him a bit irritable."

Or: Hannibal escapes from prison and Will knows it's only a matter of time before he finds him.

Notes

I'm becoming aware of the fact that I seem to only write about the book versions of these characters, but their ending is so sad, I just feel a need to fix it all the time haha
Also book will is arguably the most miserable will and I just have a thing for taking care of grouchy, depressed characters.

Title from Cardigan by Taylor Swift because I was listening to it when I thought of this fic and I'm a sucker for song lyric titles

Thank you for deciding to read this, and if you liked it, please consider leaving a comment—I truly love hearing from you guys. :)

See the end of the work for more notes

The moon hung low over the waves, painting them in silver brushstrokes. They crashed gently to shore, a low constant hum in the night. Will sat on the sand, just far back enough to stay dry, and gazed out into the dark. His knees were drawn up, arms folded atop them, and he rested his cheek there as he watched the ocean breathe. The wind stirred his hair and tugged at his shirt, as though asking him to go back inside. But he couldn't bear to be in there, not now anyway.

Because in that small empty house, the TV was blaring out the news that Hannibal Lecter had escaped.

Crawford hadn't called him, but that wasn't surprising; Will had had his number changed and never bothered to reach out to anyone. He did wonder if Jack had tried to get ahold of him anyway, had talked to old colleagues to get a number, an address, anything to tell Will *he* was coming.

Because Hannibal was coming back for him, of that much Will was certain. He wasn't the type to leave behind any loose ends, if the disappearance of Frederick Chilton was anything to go off of. And Chilton had been a nuisance, publishing his sloppy work on Hannibal and parading him around like he was an intriguing zoo animal. It was still enough to get him on the menu. Imagine then, how much worse it would be for the person who had gotten Hannibal locked up in the first place?

Will wasn't sure how much time he had left. Hannibal worked fast, and he'd already had enough time to take care of one person who'd wronged him. It could be in a week, it could be tomorrow. Will doubted he'd draw it out.

Well, he sighed, pushing himself up to his feet, *if I'm gonna die anyway.*

He headed in for a pair of shoes and a jacket, and trudged to the only other place he ever went to, intending to drown.

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The bar was rowdy tonight, much to Will's disappointment. But he went in anyway and chose a seat as far back from the front of the building as he could. He needed to get as drunk as physically possible and while he appreciated the bar's noise to block out any of his own thoughts, he didn't want to get into any sort of conversation.

He was getting there, teeth clacking clumsily against the rim of a bottle, when he realized it was empty. He pawed for another on the table and squinted indignantly at it when he realized it too was empty. *Fuck*.

Shoving out of the booth, he stumbled his way back to the bar. He supposed he could've waited for a worker to offer a refill, but he was already on his way, so whatever.

He was about to make it when someone bumped into him from behind. Nearly losing his footing, he managed to catch himself on the back of woman's chair, his forehead knocking into the back of her head.

"*Ow! Hey!*" She whipped around to fire him a searing glare. "What the hell was that?"

"Sorry," he heard himself mumble.

He'd only just gotten himself to sway back upright when someone else planted a hand on his chest and shoved him back. It took catching the table behind him and some quick thinking for him to not completely topple over.

There was a man in front of him now, a burly guy with a goatee and thick eyebrows drawn down into a scowl. "You tryin' to hit on my girl?" he demanded, and at least one other person behind him peeked over in vague interest.

Will wrinkled his nose. "*What*?"

"Don't play fuckin' dumb," Goatee snapped. "I saw you!"

This was starting to look like a migraine. "No, I wasn'," Will got out, frowning at the guy. "I'm not even—" He circled a hand in some vague gesture, as though this fully explained how he'd run into "his girl."

Apparently, it didn't, because in the next moment, a fist was cracking into the side of his face. One of the bartenders yelled a halfhearted protest, but it was drowned out by some of Goatee's friends hooting encouragement.

Will had to catch himself on another table, pain blooming across his jaw. It had been a good while since he'd gotten into a fight. He planned on holding up his hands to signal surrender, make some half-ass apology, and go home.

Instead, his knuckles broke the guy's nose.

Blood spurted, and Goatee howled, rearing backward. Will shook out his hand, swearing under his breath. *That hurt like—*

Goatee barreled into him, almost knocking the breath out of him. He had his arms around Will's middle and slammed him down onto a table, sending several people yelping and rushing out of the way. Will felt dizzy and it definitely hurt, all over actually, and he didn't care. He tilted his head to dodge another punch and Goatee's fist collided with the wood next to his face. Bringing one leg up, Will sent Goatee staggering backward with the hardest kick he could manage with alcohol swimming through his senses.

Will sat up, not yet climbing down from the table, and brought a hand up to his head. "Can we not?" he grumbled.

Goatee's answer was hauling Will down by the collar and punching him again. This one met the side of his face that had been ripped open by the Dragon, and Will let out a strangled noise. He jammed his heel against Goatee's shin and the man cursed loudly. One of the

onlookers cried out a warning as he surged forward to hit Will again, this time in the stomach.

Will was expecting a punch to the gut,

not the horrifically familiar feeling of a blade sinking into his side.

Pocketknife.

In a rush, he was back in that office again, hands scrabbling for purchase in the back of Hannibal's suit jacket as the linoleum knife sliced through his skin. He choked on a gasp, unable to move, to think.

Luckily, the man was quickly rushed by several of his friends, who hauled him back from Will in a raucous shouting crowd. He protested as they forced him away, tripping over a table leg near the entrance.

The world was hazy now, fogged over. Will pressed his palm to his head, trying to clear it. He blinked—and he was sitting on the front step of the bar, aching and alone. Carefully, he touched his side where the knife had entered and felt something rough there; lifting his shirt, he saw that someone, maybe himself, had patched it up. Most of the blood had been wiped away, and was smeared across the scar stretching over his stomach.

Will wondered if Hannibal would tear him open again.

He went home.

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He sat back on the beach, because he didn't know where else to go. He couldn't bear to be inside the house right now, confined. So he took his old place staring out into the waves again and trying to forget himself. It sucked to do so without alcohol, but that also meant going inside or back to a bar, and he didn't think he'd be particularly welcome. At some point, he must've shut his eyes and dozed for a while.

Because when he opened them again,

he was there.

"Hello, Will," Hannibal smiled, standing over him in a dark suit and with the ocean wind tugging at his hair.

Will blinked blearily up at him. *Who wears a suit to a beach?* "Doctor Lecter," he replied, voice scratchy and sleep-ridden.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. "I'd thought we'd be on first-name basis by now."

“What, is that proper etiquette after you try to kill someone?” Will scoffed. Dying evidently made him a bit irritable.

Hannibal didn’t dignify that with a response, instead taking a step toward him. Will flinched, but Hannibal only moved to sit next to him. Will was very aware of the inches of empty space between them. He glanced over him, focusing on the curve of his neck and the blue sheen the moonlight cast on his black hair. He didn’t want to look him in the eye yet.

It came out of his mouth before he could stop it: “You look…”

“Different?” Hannibal finished. Lifting his hand, he turned it over, examining it. With a jolt, Will realized he’d surgically removed the sixth polydactyl finger. “I can’t have any of your old lot tracking me down so easily, you know.”

“I was gonna say okay,” Will said flatly. “You look okay.”

Hannibal looked at him then and Will quickly dropped his eyes down to the sand under his feet. “You don’t.”

“Wow, thanks,” Will scowled. “Half of it’s because of you.”

“I didn’t mean that.” Hannibal seemed almost disappointed he’d thought so. “…I didn’t intend for that to happen, for the record,” he added disdainfully.

“Yeah. You just wanted my ex-wife dead, that’s all.”

“Ex?”

“You already knew that.”

There was a long pause. The water climbed up and down the beach.

“I was referring to how tired you seem, none of your scars,” Hannibal explained, quiet in the night. Will could feel his eyes on him now. “You look well.”

For an inexplicable reason, it was more unbearable than when Will thought he was making fun of him. He rubbed a hand over his eyes. “Can we—“ He heaved a sigh. “—not do this? I know why you’re here, all right?”

Hannibal just watched him questioningly.

Will wondered what he’d brought and where he was hiding it. A gun would be too loud and not terribly intimate. It would probably be a knife, or maybe a letter opener, to pay homage to what Will had stabbed him with that night, all those years ago. He felt suddenly sick.

“So can we just…get it over with?” he asked, hoping that Hannibal couldn’t see his hands shaking and knowing that he did.

Hannibal dipped his head. “All right.”

Will shut his eyes.

And felt Hannibal's touch on his cheek, turning his head toward him. He opened his eyes again in time to see Hannibal leaning in. Nearly tipping himself off-balance, Will jerked back. "What're you doing?" he heard himself stammer out.

Hannibal's eyes caught the light in red points, and the way they rested on Will was shockingly soft. "Isn't this what you've wanted?"

It held a certain weight to it, the tilt of the words, and Will knew all at once that Hannibal knew. Knew about how Will had felt when they were still working together, about the way Will had looked at him when he'd thought no one would notice, about how Hannibal's knife in his stomach had felt like it cut his heart out.

Heart pounding, Will found that his hands were still shaking but for other reasons now. "I…"

Hannibal grazed his fingertips over Will's cheek again, catching on the scar tissue twisting up under his eye. His thumb rested at the corner of Will's mouth. "Will?"

"*Yes*," tumbled out of Will's mouth and Hannibal took it as permission to kiss him. Will thought that he probably tasted like cheap alcohol right now, but Hannibal didn't seem to care at all. He angled his head, coaxing Will's lips apart, and Will let him. Hannibal's hand had slid around to the back his head, anchoring him and pulling him in. Will needed to be closer, as close as he could get. He'd imagined and denied this so many times, standing outside of Hannibal's cell after questioning, trying to ignore how much he wanted to pull him against the bars. Now Hannibal was here, real, looking like worship and smelling like expensive cologne, as he kissed the breath out of Will on a Florida beach.

Hannibal broke away, dragging his lips along Will's jaw. "Run away with me," he whispered, voice beautifully unsteady and because of *Will*.

Embarrassingly, Will whimpered, turning his head to rest his cheek on Hannibal's. "I'm not the best company," he mumbled.

"You're the only company I want," Hannibal murmured.

"You'll get sick of me."

"Will, I've thought of nothing but taking you from here for the last eight years."

Will felt choked up. He pulled back but only to lean their foreheads together. "Odd for someone who stabbed me before all those years," he remarked.

Hannibal's eyes glistened. "I'm sorry."

"Don't," Will said, bringing a hand up to cup Hannibal's face, in faint awe that he could do so. "I don't care. I should but I don't." He swallowed. "I've thought of you too. You used to ask about my dreams."

"Yes."

“I dreamed of you, here. Like this. I dreamed we’d run to wherever you wanted.”

“We will,” Hannibal promised. He stroked his thumb over Will’s cheekbone. “If you let me, Will, I’ll spend every day making up for what I’ve done. I’ll treat you the way I should have.” He pressed another slow kiss to Will’s mouth, Will meeting him readily this time. “I’ll adore you,” Hannibal whispered against him, “as I always have.”

I’ll adore you.

Will laughed, a giddy tearful laugh, and nodded. “Okay. Okay.” His gaze met Hannibal’s, unabashed blue into deep sunset. “Take me with you.”

End Notes

I’m very vaguely toying around with a part 2, but it would have even less plot than this and literally just be an excuse to write self-indulgent fluff of them in Italy. so im not sure if that’s enough for a whole fic, short as mine tend to be lol

Again, thank you for reading, I hope you enjoyed :3

Edit: there is now a part two! It is much more intense than I planned, but it was very fun to write and i hope you’ll check it out!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!